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# PROMISES AND PERFORMANCE—TWO VIEWS OF THE KENNEDY RECORD

**In the field of foreign affairs—**

**How does the performance of the Kennedy Administration, to date, measure up against the pledges of the Democratic Party's platform of the 1960 campaign?**

**Is Mr. Kennedy, at midterm, doing what his party promised the nation?**

The question is examined in detail in the following two exclusive articles, written by the two men who headed the platform-drafting committees for the two major parties during the 1960 conventions.

They are Charles H. Percy for the Republicans and Chester Bowles for the Democrats.

CPYRGHT

## KENNEDY TALK "IS UNRELATED TO ACTION"

by Charles H. Percy

Chairman of the 1960 Republican Platform Committee

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When President Kennedy took office in January, 1961, he dramatically proclaimed that, under the leadership of "a new generation of Americans," the tide of world events was about to turn in America's favor.

Now, almost two years later, it is clear to every discerning observer that events have taken no such favorable turn. The plain fact is that the gains of world Communism—in Latin America, in Africa, in Southeast Asia and behind the Wall in Europe—have been more marked under the Kennedy Administration than in any similar period in more than a decade.

During this period, it is true, the Communist world has been having its difficulties, arising mainly from the intensity of their efforts to extend their system. Their economy suffers from overinvestment in heavy industry—in particular, their military and space industries—and their agriculture is made inefficient by collectivization—because they find it safer for their peasants to be controlled by the state, even if they produce less. These difficulties—and not any actions or policies of the Kennedy Administration—accounted in large part for the recent lull in the cold war.

During the lull, the press of this country was filled with Administration-inspired stories that the cause of Communism was on the wane, that the peak of their expansion was now past, and that the Marxist-Leninist faith had been exploded in the minds of the rising generation by the successes of freedom.

This optimism was baseless. Some people are fooled time after time by these recurring and always temporary lulls. World Communism is like a python which, swallowing one of the very large animals upon which it feeds, remains inactive while it digests. But, when it has finished doing so,



it takes up the hunt again, as deadly as ever.

The comparative quiet of this past summer was but a backdrop for the blazing exhibition of Khrushchev's political skill in exploiting the orbiting of the two Soviet cosmonauts on the anniversary of the Wall. Since then, trouble has been mounting for us—Berlin, Cuba and the U. N.—in what is obviously a carefully paced and increasing tempo. The Administration—whose principal "hard" policy thus far has been to avoid hard decisions as long as possible, in the hope that the problems will solve themselves—seems ill-prepared for the coming crises.

**Words and deeds.** Even admirers of the Kennedy Administration have com-

mented frequently on the contrast between the boldness of Mr. Kennedy's speeches and the hesitancy and uncertainty of his actions. The hesitancy and uncertainty would be less conspicuous if they were not so mightily heralded by the trumpet calls to action. Do we remember the urgent address to the nation on fallout shelters? And the policies would be steadier and certainly more circumspect if they did not labor under such a burden of excessive expectations.

I think that there is a vital clue to what is wrong with the Kennedy Administration in this disparity between words and deeds. It is important that we understand why its rhetoric is so dangerously unrelated to its actions.

The pattern of contrast of words and deeds was foreshadowed by the 1960 Democratic platform. Its extravagant promises suggested that the good things attainable by government are unlimited and that they can all be had immediately or very soon. It never suggested that many of the things promised in the platform were impossible just because too many other things had been promised at the same time.